Computerisation/modernisation of post offices in A.P.

448. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have undertaken a programme for computerisation and modernisation of post offices in Andhra Pradesh to keep pace with the present days requirements of the customers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of post offices in the States that stand computerised as on date and how many are proposed to be computerised during the next two years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Post offices are being computerised by setting up multi-purpose counter machines providing the public one-hop-stop service, cutting down drastically waiting time at the counter. The Department has also computerised many post offices in a LAN environment which includes Post Offices Savings Bank service. In addition, softwares have been developed for total computerisation of post offices both in front and back office functions with the help of technology. Satellite communication technology is also being used for transfer of money orders from one post office to another.

(c) Ninety Five post offices in Andhra Pradesh have been computerised and many more are in the offing during the next two years, depending on the availability of funds.

Shortage of Manpower in Telecom Sector

449. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether understaffing is the main cause for poor performance of the telecom sector in the country;

(b) if so, the category-wise shortage of manpower and the steps being taken to man the Department with optimum strength; and

(c) the compelling reasons for the Department remaining under staffed and the measures initiated to overcome the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) There is no overall shortage of staff in the

public sector telecommunication companies *viz.,* Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd. (MTNL) where the average staff . to telephone ratio is 13 per 1000 telephone lines, which is higher than international figures. However, manpower shortage is felt in certain cadres in Secondary Switching Areas (SSAs) where there is a phenomenal growth of the teledensity Measures are taken to recruit staff, where required.

Dual Charge for Telephone Engineers at Idgah Exchange

†450. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of those Zonal Engineers/Sub-Zonal Engineers working in Idgah Telephone Exchange of Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited who have double charges of Sub-Zonal Engineers (Field) as well as cable and the details of those having not any charge;

(b) the reasons for e^{n}*-usting double charge to some engineers and keeping others idle; and

(c) by when the additional charge from the Engineers having double charge would be taken back and handed over to the Engineers sitting idle?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) There are two Divisions in Idgah telephone exchange. In Division-I, there are four Sub-Divisional Engineers who are responsible for outdoor plant including maintenance of cable network for their respective demarcated areas.

In Division-II, there are five Sub-Divisional Engineers (SDEs). Out of them three SDEs are in charge of external plant of their respective areas and two SDEs are responsible for maintenance of cable network of Division-II. There are no SDEs who are without charge.

(b) and (c) Not applicable in view of (a) above.

Disputes before TRAI

451. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.